



Child Care Financial Assistance Policy Advisory

To: Subsidy Administrators
From: Tyreese Nicolas, Deputy Commissioner for Family Access and Engagement
Joy Cohen, Director of Policy Development
Date: 2/23/2023
Subject: Child Care Financial Assistance Immediate Policy Changes

For the past year, EEC has been focused on improving access, efficiency, and ease of child care subsidy application and authorization processes for families. Subsidy administrators have been key partners in helping identify policies and procedural changes to ensure subsidies are more accessible and less burdensome for families to navigate. As we prepare for the implementation of a stronger, more efficient, and family-centered child care financial assistance program, we will continue to look for additional opportunities to further eliminate barriers and facilitate access through minor policy and procedure amendments.

Moving forward, EEC will communicate all proposed policy and procedure amendments to subsidy administrators through policy advisories. To ensure consistency, EEC policy advisories will be released to all EEC staff, and subsidy administrators will be responsible for distribution any policy advisories to their staff.

Questions related to any child care financial assistance policy advisory should be directed to eecsubsidymanagement@mass.gov.

This advisory is to inform subsidy administrators that EEC has made the following three child care financial assistance program policy amendments, effective immediately:

- 1. Failure to report the Non-Temporary Change of the birth of child within 30 days is no longer considered an Intentional Program Violation and a family shall not lose access to care.** (Policy 3.7 Non-Temporary Changes #3)

- 2. The definition of relative includes great grandparent.**

Relative. Sibling, aunt, uncle, grandparent or **great grandparent**, whether by birth, marriage or adoption. (Policy Guide: Chapter 1: Definitions)

- 3. ECE Pilot Policy Waiver for FCC Provider families caring for their own children.**

The following policy waiver shall apply **only** to FCC provider or assistant families who are **new** to the child care financial assistance program. FCC providers and assistants with

current subsidies are not eligible to switch to the pilot at reauthorization even if their program is not at capacity. A variance may be requested via ecsubsidymanagement@mass.gov, if there are extenuating circumstances, and may be granted at the sole discretion of EEC.

Applicants participating in this pilot who are Family Child Care Providers/Assistants will be able to access financial assistance for their own children or foster children to receive subsidized education and care services in their Family Child Care home or the home in which they are employed if desired so long as the Family Child Care home is willing to accept a voucher, there is capacity and there is no disruption in care for any children. In addition, applicants working for a Subsidy Administrator that is a contracted provider are able to access a prioritized contracted slot, if desired. (Policy 12.1.2)